

Ritual

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Category: Legion of Super Heroes

Language: English

Status: Completed

Published: 1999-09-16 09:00:00

Updated: 1999-09-16 09:00:00

Packaged: 2016-04-27 09:48:15

Rating: M

Chapters: 1

Words: 4,029

Publisher: [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)

Summary: The White Witch has a dilemma only Sun Boy can resolve. Very adult themes and discussion. [Mysa/Dirk]

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Archive: Ask, and ye shall receive. Warnings: Very adult themes and discussion, no actual onscreen sex. Fandom: Legion of Super-Heroes, the 30th century, pre-Zero Hour. Yeah, the old continuity. No knowledge of the characters required, but the briefest of metas follows the story for those interested in knowing more. Summary: The White Witch has a dilemma only Sun Boy can resolve. Disclaimer: All characters property of DC Comics. What I have done with them is mine.

> Another spell failed, and the White Witch had no idea why.  
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That had been happening more and more often lately, to her dismay. Fortunately, she had not had any such problem during a Legion mission-yet-but the specter of failure lay heavily on her mind. Her divinations gave no hint to the reason, so there was only one thing left to do.

She steeled herself, and went to talk to her sister.

Dream Girl opened the door before Mysa had the chance to knock. "Come in, Mysa! I've been expecting you."

"Of course you have." Mysa glided into the room, the permanent spell that kept her feet from touching earth making her movements more graceful than nature permitted her own gait. "Did your vision tell you why I came?"

"I was hoping it was just for a family visit, but..." Nura looked into her sister's face. "But it see that it's not."

"Would it were so. I have a problem, and I believe you might be able to help me. My magic...seems to be failing, and I do not know why."

Nura sat, her brow creasing in puzzlement. "What do you mean, 'failing'?"

"Just that. Simple incantations do not perform as intended or do not function at all. I fear that this...difficulty might increase, and I must know the cause of it."

"How...how can I help?"

Mysa took a breath. "Nura, I'm asking you to look into the future and see if you can find out why this is happening, or what I might do to remedy it."

Surprised, Dream Girl looked at her sister in amazement. "You know my powers don't work that way..."

"No, Nura. I know you do not \*use\* your powers this way, usually. But if I am to remain the White Witch and a Legionnaire, I must know what I am to do. "

"Well...all right. I'll give it a try. Just because you're my sister, and I love you." Nura breathed deep, composed herself, and concentrated.

After a moment, her eyes flew open in shock. "Mysa, I saw...you and Dirk, making love!"

If it were possible, Mysa grew even paler than usual. "But...that isn't...I've never..."

"What?" Nura stared at her sister, astonished. "\*Never?!\*"

"Some of us spent our lifetimes in \*study,\* Nura, not chasing the pleasure of flesh!" Mysa snapped, her shrill tone revealing her consternation.

"I'm sorry, Mysa. I was a little surprised, that's all." She went over and hugged her younger sister tight. "Let's figure this out together, all right?"

"Yes." Mysa closed her eyes. "Your visions always come true, so this must be. But \*why?\* And why Sun Boy?"

Dream Girl cleared her throat, delicately. "You don't, uh...have feelings for him?"

Irritated, Mysa glared. "Of course I do. As for all my fellow Legionnaires. He is a fine companion. But no, I have not been considering him-or any other-for a potential bed-partner. I am not \*you,\* sister."

"Whoa. Hold it, Mysa. You came to \*me\* with a question, remember?

Don't blame me if you don't like the answer, or how I'm \*trying\* to help you decipher it." Her voice was mild, but Mysa saw she had hurt Nura deeply.

"I'm sorry. Truly. I am simply so...bewildered by this vision, I have forgotten myself."

"Forgiven. So if you haven't been thinking about him, why would you choose to make love with him? Or anyone?"

"Anyone." Mysa started, then looked at Nura, wide-eyed. "Could that be it? I asked you to peer into the future with my magic in mind; and that must be the answer. For magic. Of course."

"Mysa? I don't understand."

"A ritual, Nura. Ancient sorcery. My powers are fading and I must renew them, and that means a change in myself."

"Well...as long as it makes sense to you." Nura smiled a bit. "Don't yell at me for this, but you \*could\* choose worse than Dirk. Not much better either, really."

"But...I hardly know him. Would not it be better to...ask someone...with whom I have a deeper relationship?" Mysa blushed, the color painfully bright against the white of her skin.

"Like who? You're not exactly close with many people on the team-" Nura held up a hand. "Not that it's your fault. Your magic takes a lot of your free time, I know. And from what you've told me, all of your teachers and peers on Sorcerers' World are either ancient or just plain alien."

"Perhaps someone who understands ritual...like..." Still blushing, she almost mumbled the next words. "Like Element Lad."

"Jan? Well, he's good looking enough, but..." Nura sighed. "Listen, Mysa, can I talk frankly for a minute?"

"Could I stop you?"

"Nope. Okay. Jan's a great guy. Great leader, though don't tell him I said so. \*Hopelessly\* shy around women. I mean, look at how long it took Shvaughn to catch him! Sure, he might \*understand,\* but you and he would end up staring at each other, so self-conscious you'd never get around to \*doing\* anything."

Mysa had shut her eyes again tightly, but said resolutely, "Go on."

"Besides, you don't want to get between him and Shvaughn, anyway. \*That\* also leaves out Ultra Boy-Tinya barely lets him out of the HQ by himself, never mind anything else-Colossal Boy because of Yera, and Mon-El. Not that I think Shady wouldn't share, but..." She looked thoughtful for a moment, then shook her head and went on. "Cham is sweet, but really, he's a \*Durlan.\* Invisible Kid is cute, but Jacques would \*die\* of embarrassment at the thought. Magnetic Kid and Polar Boy are...well, excuse me, but \*ick.\* One's a child and the other doesn't bear thinking about." She shuddered. "I'd lend you Thom, but he's not really interested in anyone else, bless him. And

Timber Wolf? \*Really\* not a good idea."

"And?"

"That leaves...oh, Mysa." Nura shook her head. "You do \*not\* want to get involved with Brainiac 5. Look, I know you two have this little science-versus-magic rivalry going on, and that's fine. But Brainy is...just not appropriate. He's handsome and brilliant, but he's as clumsy as Jan with women and not at all sensitive. Not in the way you want, anyway."

"So we have come full circle, and thus my choice is made?"

Nura sighed. "I'm telling you what I see. Maybe my vision meant something else entirely, but \*you\* seemed to think it was accurate."

"Tell me why you said what you did, then, about Dirk Morgna."

"Dirk is...flashy. Occasionally self-absorbed. And he knows very well how attractive he is."

"Hardly a glowing recommendation, Nura."

"Hold on, I'm not done. He's also intelligent, dedicated, and most of all, kind. He would never hurt a friend. And for all his playboy reputation, he never reveals anything about his lovers that they don't want others to know. He can keep a secret." Mysa, her face turned away, did not see Nura's fleeting blush.

"Thank you, sister. I will...consider all you have said, most carefully."

\*\*\*\*\*

Taken in the context of her life, this was not so difficult a challenge, merely an embarrassing one. She owed Nura greatly for not having teased her, or asked questions Mysa was not prepared to answer.

Possibly Nura did not even understand how awkward this was. The beautiful Dream Girl drew men to her effortlessly and had never wanted for attention or acclaim. For the White Witch...things had been much more complicated.

Nura Nal and Mysa Nal, Dream Girl and the White Witch. Two sisters, both the daughters of the High Seer of Naltor, both Legionnaires. They could not have been more different.

Nura was the strongest precognitive talent of their generation. Mysa herself had been born without the ability to see the future; blind, among a world of seers. It was as if Nura had inherited not only all of their mother Kiwa's talent, but Mysa's as well. Which was ridiculous, of course. Even as a child she had known that. But even as a child she knew she was different, and hated it; hated the sidelong looks and overt condescension, and the pity. The pity most of all.

She asked Kiwa the history of their world, and there Mysa found hope. The Naltorians' prescient ability had originally grown not from a

fluke of genetics but from a magical heritage, the people having originally traveled to colonize Naltor from Sorcerers' World. Within a few generations their talent for magic faded, leaving only the ability to see snatches and glimpses of the future.

High Seer Kiwa died not long after telling Mysa this tale, and it was her funeral that crystallized things. Nura-already accepted as the disciple of the new High Seer Beren, and likely to attain that post herself someday-declared that she would take care of Mysa always.

Mysa did not want to be taken care of. Furious, she pledged to find her own power, her own magic. Only ten years old, she demanded and was granted leave by Beren to depart Naltor for Sorcerers' World, the last known stronghold of true sorcery in a technological galaxy. What drove her was not only anger, but determination: to prove herself worthwhile, to not be a burden for Nura or anyone else. To escape the pity and replace it with respect.

Upon reaching Sorcerers' World, that same determination won her the right to remain. She found the talent within herself and learned quickly, impressing her teachers with the ease and speed of her understanding. In a brief span of six years she was ready to take the final test and claim her place among them. So she would have, if the jealous ambition of one of her teachers had not interfered.

His name was Mordru, and the Legion-indeed, the whole of the galaxy-would come to know his name in time, and fear it. But at that time he was simply one among the other guardians of Sorcerers' World, entrusted with the ancient mysteries. In Mysa he saw a potential rival and threat to his plans, and it was a simple matter to sabotage her initiation ceremony.

At the trial Mysa called on her magic as she had done many times before, but this time a foul smoke arose. When it dissipated, a much-changed Mysa lay there: no longer a lovely young woman, but a twisted and bitter Hag. The teachers believed that the ceremony had revealed Mysa's true nature, and thus banished her from their world. Lost and afraid, angry and confused, she accepted the first haven to offer itself: Prince Evillo, a villain of some ambition. She joined his "Devil's Dozen" and aided Evillo in his schemes, too disconsolate to seek any other alternative.

Mordru revealed his evil intentions not long after that, and the teachers realized their mistake. Unable to leave Sorcerers' World themselves, they sent Nura the information and ritual to free Mysa from Mordru's twisted enchantment.

Restored, she helped the Legion defeat Mordru in their second cataclysmic encounter with the archmage. Nura wanted her to stay with the Legion, but instead Mysa returned to Sorcerers' World, determined to continue her studies in preparation for the day that Mordru arose again-for he surely would, and in the manner of magicians more powerful than ever. Her studies took her deeper into the mysteries, transforming not only her understanding of the universe but her body as well. This transformation was more gentle than Mordru's, and a welcome one. Her skin and hair paled to white and antennae blossomed at her eyes, which darkened to mirror the warm color of the scarlet gem at her throat. With this change Mysa truly became the White Witch, mastering both ancient magics and spells of her own design.

But in the end it was not Mordru who brought Mysa to the Legion; it was a threat far worse. For all his power, Mordru was still a man, with a man's weaknesses.

Darkseid was a god.

This dark and angry power desired the galaxy for his plaything, and it fell to the Legion of Super-Heroes to stop him. It was Mysa's sorcery that conjured the means to stop him: Highfather Izaya and through him the dark god's son Orion, the alpha force to Darkseid's omega. His plans thwarted, Darkseid withdrew and the galaxy began the task of restoring the monstrous damage he had inflicted.

And Mysa Nal, the White Witch, accepted an invitation and became a Legionnaire.

In fighting Darkseid she discovered a truth that her teachers had forgotten: that magic faded unless applied, and that the Art could only grow through use. With the Legion she found opportunity to stretch her powers, employing spells in situations their original casters never envisioned.

So for the Legion and for herself, she now faced another change.

"'Then 'twere well it were done quickly,'" she murmured, then shook her head; the associations of \*that\* quotation were ill ones. But the sentiment was true. Now that she had an answer, it had become the \*only\* answer. Her magic was like that, based as it was on her strength of purpose as much as on pure knowledge. To cast a spell required faith more than anything; faith in her abilities, belief in her \*self.\*

And because she believed that Nura's vision was a true one, it had become the truth.

Now it remained only to turn the vision to reality-and here, she faltered. It was one thing to know what had to be done, quite another to \*do\* it.

Before she lost her nerve entirely she placed a comm call to his room, but he was not there. That was just as well; she could use the time to prepare what she might say.

"Dirk? This is...Mysa. Would you come by my quarters, sometime? I have a...favor to ask."

\*\*\*\*\*

He arrived at her door the next morning, not too early. "Witch? What can I do for you?"

She motioned for him to enter. "Call me Mysa, first."

"All right, Mysa." He smiled, and sat when she indicated a place.

"This is...difficult for me, Dirk. Will you simply listen, for a

moment?"

He looked perplexed, but willing. "Sure."

"I want to...I want you to...\*spirits,\* this is hard!" She closed her eyes and took a deep breath. "I would like you to make love with me."

Not a sound. She opened her eyes to find Dirk staring at her, obviously shocked speechless; and in a corner of her heart she wondered if this was what Nura felt like, with her power over men.

Now it had been said, and she found a curious freedom in that. "Please breathe.... If you were to fall over from hypoxia in my quarters, I don't know how I should explain it to Brainiac 5!"

"You...uh..." He shook his head, amazed. "Wow. I have to tell you, Mysa, of all the possible things I imagined you might ask, that wasn't even on the list."

"Well...I have good reason. Would you care to hear it?"

"Please! And, uh..."

"Listen first, and then you will understand."

He nodded uncertainly, but said nothing.

"When Mordru aged me to the Hag you first met, he forced me to perform the ritual of the Crone, an ancient form of enchantment. It strengthened my power, even though it was done out of season; Maiden to Mother to Crone, do you understand? When I regained my true form and age and began to study for myself, I took on this aspect-the shape and image of the White Witch-and performed the Maiden ceremony. Now I have reached another plateau, and if I am to continue to be of use to the Legion-if I am to continue learning for myself-I must go on to that last stage."

He had listened carefully. "Mysa, do you mean...you want to have a baby? I'm not...I mean, I wasn't..." he foundered, seemingly even more overwhelmed than before.

"Oh, no! No, certainly not. 'Mother' is a descriptive term, not a literal one! But to pursue further magics, I must find another focus. And in the pattern I have chosen, that means...becoming a woman truly, in spirit as well as form. And this...ceremony...is one step toward that."

"Never heard it called that, before." He laughed, a nervous exhalation. "Okay. So I think I understand the 'why,' at least as much as I can without being a magician..." He shook his head again. "What a thing to base your powers on."

That was not entirely correct, but he was speaking again, and she was content to let the misconception go.

"But I have to ask....Why me?" He looked at her, his blue eyes puzzled.

She knew this question was inevitable, and had prepared for it.

The one thing she could \*not\* do was mention Nura's vision. Even though she was mind-blind, Mysa knew that most people reacted badly to having their future foretold for them. Naltorians were taught that very young. The Legionnaires accepted Nura's power when it related to threats or villains, but they carefully avoided asking her about their own futures, and Nura was too well trained to tell.

"Perhaps it was ill-mannered on my part, but I...overheard Violet defending you to Phantom Girl, saying you were kind."

"Oh." Then he blushed, startling her. "I don't even want to \*think\* about that conversation. Why on Earth would they be talking about....Uh, never mind. I don't want to know."

"Then...will you? I know this is sudden, but..."

He stood and walked toward her, then took her hand. "I think...I think I understand how uncomfortable this was for you. And I'm terribly flattered. If this is really what you want, Mysa, I'd be honored."

She knew she had chosen rightly, by his delicacy and grace.

"But I have to tell you.... I know this is important to you, and I'm not taking it lightly, but I can't see it as a spell you're casting!"

Mysa sat for the first time since he entered her room, and he took a chair beside her. "Oh, but this too is a ritual-perhaps the oldest known to mankind, and the first practiced by magi."

He seemed doubtful again. "So, uh, does this-ritual-require anything?"

"As I understand, you have performed it many times, isn't that correct?" She smiled, now comfortable enough to tease. "No, this is the simplest kind of sorcery. No sigils to cast, no elements to conjure, no sacrifice of blood-well, perhaps just a little, from me." She flushed, only a tinge, and went on. "Surely you know that some of the finest magi came from your own birth-world, from Earth!"

"No, not really. I spent most of my time studying physicists, not magicians."

"Truly, Earth brought forth some of the greatest in our legends: the Stranger and the Laughing Rogue, the Blind Man and the Two-Made-One, and those who were Fate...."

"I've seen you do some amazing things, don't get me wrong, but I guess I'm with Brainy on this one. He says that your magic is simply a science he doesn't understand yet."

She laughed, a bell-like tone. "But that is too perfect, do you see? Because to me, your science is simply a magic \*I\* do not yet understand!"

"Well, then, my lady mage....If you allow me, I'll show you the kind



of magic I \*do\* know!"

She gazed at him, more certain by the moment that this was right. "I'd like that. Very much."

"Well, then." He stood, and offered his arm. "Have you eaten today?"

Confused, she said, "No...but..."

He stopped, and faced her. "Mysa, listen. I won't hurt you; I think you trust me enough for that." When she nodded, he went on. "But you're tense, and I'm still a little...surprised by all this. We could both use the time to relax, and maybe get to know each other a little better?"

"You're right. Please, lead on-you know this ritual far better than I."

\*\*\*\*\*

Several days later:

Mysa gazed down on Dirk's sleeping face, enjoying the warmth of his body against hers, and the afterglow of her desire.

Not only kind, as Violet had said, but generous and thoughtful as well. That first day they had simply eaten together and talked more, about the Legion and their respective experiences. The next had been occupied in what Dirk had called "seeing the sights"-traveling the breadth of his native planet and discovering the wonders Earth still had to offer tourists in the 30th century. For all her time spent in Metropolis with the Legion, Mysa had rarely been away from the city except on missions, and she was astonished by the diversity and \*life\* thriving on what many still considered the "prime" world.

Even better, they had traveled anonymously, she by means of an illusion spell and he by the simple expedient of common garb rather than Legion costume. It was rare that Legionnaires had the chance \*not\* to be Legionnaires, even for a day, and she cherished it.

Quite naturally he kissed her good night, and it was even easier the next night, when she invited him into her room. He had stayed but only slept next to her, as she became accustomed to his presence.

Tonight they had \*not\* slept, and he had made it very easy to forget there was a purpose beyond pleasure to this. Perhaps that was the lesson, after all.

If so, Mysa was determined to learn it well. She trailed a slender finger along his shoulder, to rouse him.

The night wasn't over yet.

META

Mysa-Mysa Nal of Naltor, aka the White Witch. A master mage capable

of both powerful and subtle sorceries. A quiet woman unless provoked, Mysa's abilities added new dimension and power to the Legion. Her unassuming but awe-inspiring strengths as both mage and character make her one of my favorite Legionnaires. This fic is \*very\* AU except for her history.

Dirk-Dirk Morgna of Earth (Terra), aka Sun Boy. Has incredible powers involving heat, light, and fire. Dirk is the Legion playboy. Terribly handsome with flashy powers and personality to match, he's a 30th century babe magnet of mammoth proportions. He is also a scientist of no little distinction and a compassionate, honorable man.

Nura-Nura Nal of Naltor, aka Dream Girl. Mysa's older sister. Has precognitive dreams that always come true. Also a scientist and remarkable tactician under that pretty face and platinum-colored hair. Nura's got 'tude and she's not afraid to use it!

NOTE: "Then 'twere well it were done quickly..." Shakespeare, \*Macbeth,\* I, vii. Of course, Mysa read this most famous piece of Earth literature concerning witches, and she was much disturbed by it. Lovely language, though.

Oh, and Earth's mages Mysa mentioned were the Phantom Stranger and the John Constantine, Mr. E and Dr. Occult, and the various Drs. Fate.

End  
file.